

Temporary WIC Food Items and Frequently Asked Questions May 4, 2020

We have made temporary additions to our foods list to provide families some flexibility while shopping since some WIC foods have become hard to find. Unlike other food programs, the WIC program has **not** increased the benefits that are normally issued to each participant.

	WIC Food Category	Temporary New Items
	Cheese	Varying sizes of allowable WIC cheeses up to 48 oz. Shredded cheese and cheese sticks.
	Tofu	No additions at this time.
	Milk	Organic milk. (Does not include dry, evaporated, or ultra-high temperature). 2% allowed in addition to skim, low-fat, and fat free. (Does not include dry, evaporated, or ultra-high temperature).
	Soy Beverage	Organic soy beverage.
	Eggs	Extra large and jumbo eggs.
	Cereal	Some smaller sizes available.
	Legumes	Organic canned beans, dried beans, and peanut butter. Some larger sizes of beans available.
	Fish	Some tuna 4-packs of 5 oz cans. Some salmon 14.75 oz cans.
	Infant Cereal	Organic and added fruit infant cereals.
	Infant Fruits and Vegetables	Organic infant fruits and vegetables. Gerber 2-packs of 2-oz containers.
	Infant Meats	Organic infant meats.
	Breads/Whole Grains	32 oz rice. Larger sizes of bread available.
	Fruits and Vegetables	No additions at this time.
	Yogurt	Any variety of fat (including non-fat, low-fat, or whole) of already approved yogurts.
	Frozen Juice Concentrate	Organic and blended juices.
	Juice	128 oz any already approved juice. Organic and blended juices (ex. Apple Berry or Peach Mango etc).

If you have any questions, call your local clinic or 1-800-242-4942. You can also email us at MDH.WIC@Maryland.gov.

We have put together these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help you determine whether you can get the foods from our temporary expanded list based on what you have in your benefit balance. Please keep in mind that there may be a delay in these temporary items appearing in a grocery store's database. We ask that you be patient and help us as we work through this temporary expansion.

1. Is it just the shredded cheese and cheese sticks that can be purchased up to 48 ounces or can I purchase block and/or sliced up to 48 ounces too?

There are varying sizes for all cheeses including block, sliced, shredded cheese and cheese sticks up to 48 ounces. Most of the shredded cheeses approved are 8 and 16 ounces. Most of the larger cheese packages are in blocks.

2. What are the smallest sizes that can be purchased for cereal?

The smallest cereal approved is 8.9 ounces of previously approved cereals. Individual serving cereals and bulk packs of individual servings are not approved.

3. What are some of the larger sizes of bread?

Larger sizes include 18, 20, 22, and 24 ounces of previously approved bread, plus a few newer items/brands not on the current Authorized Foods List. Bread is issued in 1 pound (16 ounce) packages. Larger packages will be redeemed as 1 package.

4. Please clarify what can be purchased with larger size items that are being temporarily added based on combined family benefits.

Larger size packages can only be purchased if there is an adequate benefit balance. Family benefits are combined on the eWIC card, so larger size packages are being approved to provide more flexibility.

- Cheese is issued in ounces. Ounces are subtracted from the benefit balance as food items are purchased. Any combination of sizes can be purchased up to the total benefit balance.
- Dry beans are issued as 16 ounce bags. A 32 ounce bag would equal 2 bags.
- Canned beans are issued in cans (15 to 16 ounces per can). A 30 to 32 ounce size can would equal 2 cans.
- Rice is issued in 1 pound (16 ounce) packages. A 2 pound package (32 ounces) would equal 2 packages.
- Juice is issued in containers (64 ounce) for children 1 – 4 years. A 128 ounce juice would equal 2 containers. Adult women are issued frozen juice and are not affected by these new additions.
- Fish is issued in ounces for exclusively breastfeeding participants. Ounces are subtracted from the benefit balance as food items are purchased. A 4-pack of 5 ounce tuna fish would equal 20 ounces. Any combination of sizes can be purchased up to the total benefit balance.

5. Please clarify what can be purchased with smaller size items that are being temporarily added.

Cereal is issued as 36 ounces per participant. Ounces are subtracted from the benefit balance as food items are purchased. Smaller box sizes (not including individual serving sizes) of previously approved cereals were added to allow for flexibility in shopping based on product availability.

Infant fruits and vegetables are issued as 1 container (4 ounces). A 2-pack of 2 ounce containers would equal 4 ounces (1 container). If this item is purchased, the benefit balance would be reduced by 1 container.

6. If I was always issued 1%, low-fat or fat free milk, can I now get 2%? Can I get whole milk if I can't find anything else?

Yes, you can now get 2% in addition to skim, low-fat, and fat free. This does not include dry, evaporated, or ultra-high temperature milks. You can also get organic milk, but it does not include dry, evaporated, or ultra-high temperature milks.

No, you cannot get whole milk if you are issued 2%, skim, low-fat, and fat free milk.

7. Can I get yogurt in any variety of fat, even if I was always issued 1% or fat free?

Yes, you may get any variety of fat (including non-fat, low-fat, or whole) of those already approved yogurts on the foods list. This is also the same for those who are issued whole milk yogurt; you can get any variety of fat that is available for purchase.

8. What if an expanded item does not scan as WIC approved, but I believe I should be able to get it?

We encourage all participants to use the UPC scanner in the Maryland WIC mobile app. This will help you determine if an item is WIC approved and in your benefit balance. Please keep in mind that an item may scan as WIC approved, but may not be in your benefit balance. You must pay close attention to the message in the app.

If you believe the item has scanned correctly in the app but is not showing as WIC approved, we recommend that you submit the UPC for review by using the submit feature in the mobile app.

If the item is WIC approved in the app but the store system is not allowing it to be purchased, please email the store name, location and product information to the Maryland WIC email account, mdh.wic@maryland.gov. If you can take a picture of the item and attach it to the email, that would be very helpful.

If you have additional questions or are still unsure whether you can get some of the new items based on the benefits issued to you, call your local clinic.